



## ANNUAL REPORT 2020

"Our vision is to create an enduring platform for professional arts journalism that ignites conversation about the arts amongst artists, audiences and the wider community."



ABN: 23 691 862 633

[www.seesawmag.com.au](http://www.seesawmag.com.au)

*Seesaw Magazine acknowledges the Wadjuk people of the Noongar nation on whose land we are based. We pay our respects to the traditional custodians and elders past, present and emerging.*

## CHAIR'S REPORT

2020 is a year most of us will never forget! While the arts sector is used to rising to a diversity of challenges, it certainly has not had a global pandemic to deal with in living memory.

I could not be prouder of Seesaw Magazine during its inaugural year as an incorporated organisation. It more than rose to the challenges thrown at it as it strived to meet its vision to create an enduring platform for professional arts journalism that generates and accelerates conversation about the arts amongst artists, audiences and the wider community.

With a busy festivals season completed, it soon became clear that Australia was not immune to the impacts of COVID-19. Seesaw immediately pivoted to focus its role in providing critical information to the sector as government restrictions quickly closed venues and productions. We also launched a number of programs online to support local companies and artists.

Towards the end of the year, Western Australia was able to slowly begin rebuilding audiences for live performance and exhibitions, albeit with limited venue capacities and strict ever-changing rules around social distancing and hygiene. Seesaw continued its critical role in rebuilding audiences for our sector.

There are many to thank for supporting Seesaw during 2020, commencing with the State Government through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries who provided strategic and project funding to enable Seesaw to provide its professional and independent coverage of Western Australian arts and continue its growth towards greater sustainability. Seesaw was also able to access COVID stimulus funding from the Federal Government.

A big thank you to our Arts Supporters, those arts companies and organisations that have supported Seesaw financially since 2019. You continue to be a vital source of funding for our core operations. Our very first donations campaign resulted in over \$31,000 being raised and we particularly thank our key donors the Wright-Burt Foundation, Warwick Hemsley and Phil Thick.

To my fellow board members who have all played an essential role in bringing their much-needed skills and expertise to support our organisation – a huge thank you to Stephen Bevis, Janelle O'Hare, Michelle White, Ruth Callaghan, Natalie Jenkins, Rosalind Appleby and Nina Levy, together with Advisory Group members Henry Boston, Margrete Helgeby-Chaney and Georgia Malone.

Lastly, a big thank you to our core staff - to our Co-Managing Editors Nina Levy and Rosalind Appleby, to Business & Marketing Manager, Gabrielle Sullivan, and Finance Officer, Amanda Scoble. Well done and thank you for your significant work and contribution, well over and above your part-time roles.

As we continue our journey as a newly incorporated organisation, we must rebuild and grow our readership from the lows of last year. We have many challenges ahead, but we are culturally and financially strong, have excellent relationships with our stakeholders and a mindset to willingly grasp new and innovative opportunities and partnerships. As at 31 December 2020, our operating profit was \$55,600, providing an important level of reserves.

With quality research underway and a focus on building our readership, it is now essential that we finalise a business model that will enable a sustainable operation for Seesaw for many years to come.

Shane Colquhoun AM  
Chair

## MANAGING EDITORS' REPORT

In terms of challenges 2020 felt like the gift that kept giving!

While the impact of the pandemic was apparent, particularly in our readership figures which took a substantial hit in 2020, there were benefits too in that we fast-tracked some of our longer-term goals.

As a result, we broadened the scope of our coverage of the arts sooner than we had anticipated, specifically in the areas of news features and podcasts. The challenge we face now is how we will resource this expansion.

### Editorial highlights of 2020 include:

- **2020 Fringe World and Perth Festival:** Seesaw published over 100 reviews across 7 weeks, drawing on a team of 26 contributors, with the support of sub editor Lesley Zampatti. Readership was steady - not the increase we had hoped our marketing campaign would produce, but reader retention (in terms of time spent on the site and bounce rate) improved with session duration increasing by 34%. We attributed this to the new website design.
- **The Friends Lounge:** Established to fill the gap in offerings to our Friends, this initiative, in fact, was not well attended by Friends. That said, it was enjoyed by those who did attend and we received useful feedback, which is that people are keen to have the option to listen to a recording, so they can choose when they access the content.
- **Mentoring of emerging First Nations critics:** Seesaw partnered with Perth Festival to provide a series of workshops, attended by five writers. The aim of this training was to prepare the writers to be able to write reviews during Perth Festival. Although it was difficult to prepare the writers because of the relative lack of performances on offer, three of the writers did contribute to our coverage of 2021 Perth Festival, mentored by the Managing Editors, and the mentoring is ongoing.
- **Podcast:** In response to the decline in reviews due to the pandemic we brought forward our plans for podcasting and completed podcast training with Voicebox Media in April/May 2020. The Managing Editors were joined by three contributors. We had planned to launch a podcast series in late 2020. This was delayed, however, due to lack of funding. Instead, we experimented with including some audio of interviews with artists on the website (as opposed to a formal podcast platform), which enabled us to practise some of the skills we learned, whilst diversifying our content. As we were successful in our second application to Lotterywest will now be able to launch the podcast in June 2021.
- **The establishment of the Editorial and Ethics committee:** Expertly chaired by Steve

Bevis, this committee has provided invaluable support and direction for the Managing Editors, particularly in regard to editor and writer mentoring/training, and developing editorial policies and checklists.

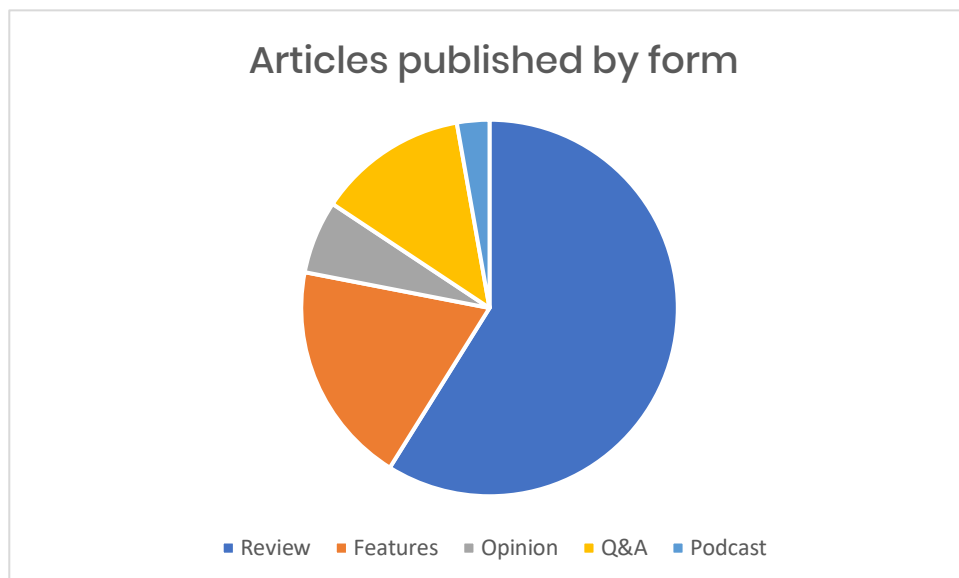
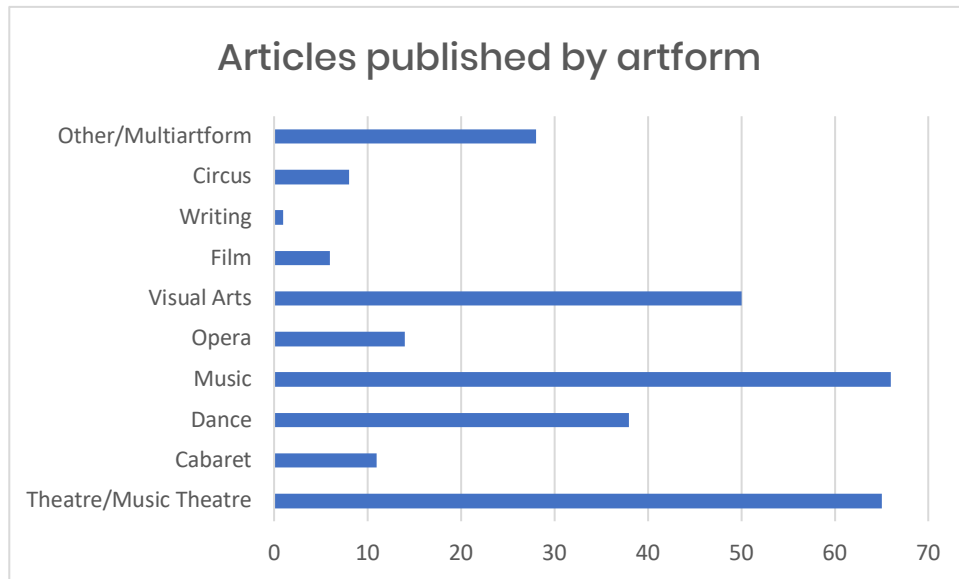
- **News feature writing workshops and ongoing mentoring:** Steve Bevis provided a news feature writing workshop first to the Managing Editors, and then later in the year to four of our contributors (we invited six but two were unable to attend). Steve has generously continued to give his time informally, as required, to help Nina and Rosalind refine their skills, both as writers and editors. The combination of formal and informal training has been invaluable and we thank Steve profusely. As a result of this training, we were more confidently able to write, as well as commission and edit news features.
- **Syndication partnerships:** The syndication agreement with Scoop established in September 2019 continued (two articles per month) in exchange for free access to Scoop's events listing on the Seesaw website. In the period September 2019 - September 2020 Scoop published 11 articles which attracted 2,102 page views and 40 outbound links to seesawmag.com.au. The articles were also featured in Scoop's newsletters and social media. Meetings were held with Business News to negotiate a similar syndication arrangement in exchange for advertising contra, and this new relationship formally commenced in early 2021.

Rosalind Appleby and Nina Levy  
**Managing Editors**

## 2020 ACHIEVEMENTS

- Published 287 articles across the year including 169 reviews, 55 features, 18 opinion pieces, 37 Q&As and expanded our content to produce 8 podcasts.
- Provided the most comprehensive media coverage in quality and quantity of the 2020 January/February festivals season.
- Commissioned paid articles from 34 contributors.
- Managing Editors mentored a group of five First Nations writers in a partnership with Perth Festival and have commenced commissioning the writers.
- Continued our syndication with Scoop Digital and secured a syndication agreement with Business News which commenced early in 2021.
- Secured financial support from government including the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries and Lotterywest.
- Secured significant private and philanthropic donations through our first donations campaign, representing 27% of our income.
- Continued to receive support through our Arts Supporters – companies, organisations and institutions.
- Appointed the inaugural Board of Directors of Seesaw Magazine Incorporated, a group of highly engaged, experienced and supportive representatives from the arts and media industries.
- Weathered the vagaries of the sector closure through the COVID-19 restrictions.

## 2020 PUBLISHED ARTICLES



## OUR READERS

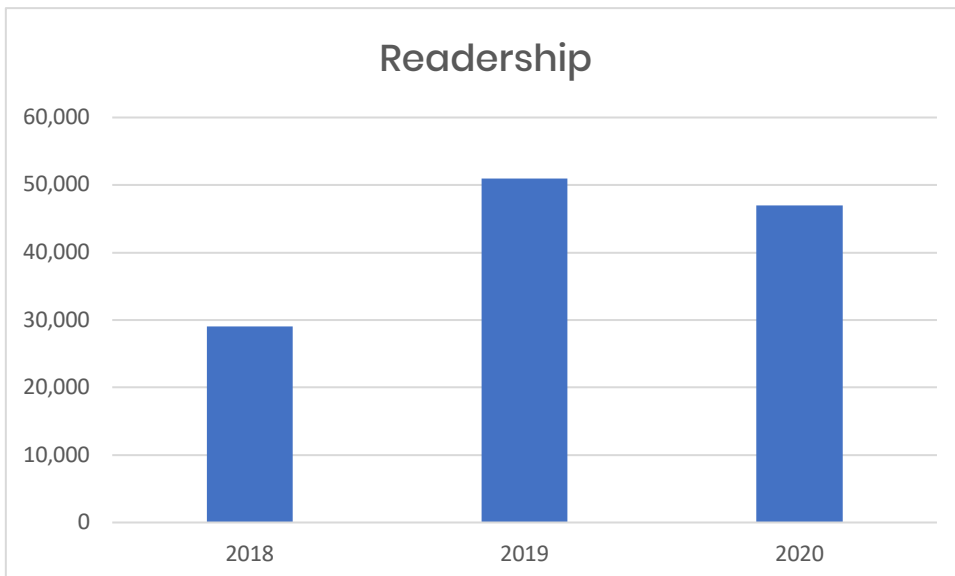
Our vision is to create an enduring platform for professional arts journalism that ignites conversation about the arts amongst artists, audiences and the wider community. So, our connection with our readers is vital.

In 2018 we had 29,000 users (unique visitors to the website), with a significant rise to 51,000 in 2019. In 2020 our visitor numbers fell to 47,000 which we attribute to the impact of venue closures as a result of COVID-19 restrictions and our consequent reduced content. However, when venues re-opened, even with reduced capacity, we saw a return to pre-COVID levels from October 2020.

We have been building our connections with our readers through our social media platforms: Facebook 1,902 Instagram 1,459 and Twitter 208.

Further, we now have over 1,000 e-news subscribers and can boast a very high open rate of 39%.

Our strongest demographic is the 25-34 age group (26% of readers); nearly 60% of our readers are aged 18-44, confirming that we are engaging and developing the next generation of arts lovers in Western Australia.



# THE SEESAW TEAM

## Inaugural Board of Directors

Chair	Shane Colquhoun AM
Deputy Chair	Stephen Bevis
Treasurer	Janelle O'Hare
Secretary	Michelle White
Members	Rosalind Appleby Ruth Callaghan Natalie Jenkins Nina Levy

## Advisory Group Members

Henry Boston, Georgia Malone and Margrete Helgeby-Chaney

## Editorial and Ethics Committee

Chair	Stephen Bevis
Members	Rosalind Appleby Nina Levy Georgia Malone
Contributors' Representative	Jaimi Wright

## Personnel

Managing Editors	Rosalind Appleby and Nina Levy
Sub editor, Festivals	Lesley Zampatti
Business and Marketing Manager	Gabrielle Sullivan
Finance Manager	Amanda Scoble

## Contributors

Xan Ashbury | Ron Banks | Sandra Bowdler | Varnya Bromilow | Lauren Catellani | Steven Cohen | Eduardo Cossio | Patrick Gunasekera | Tiffany Ha | Jan Hallam | Belinda Hermawan | Barbara Hostalek | Robert Housley | Erin Hutchinson | Ara Jansen | Miranda Johnson | Isabelle Leclizio | Garry Lee | Tanya Lee | Leon Levy | Craig McKeough | Jonathan Marshall | Mark Naglazas | Jo Pickup | Tanya Rodin | Daisy Sanders | Jenny Scott | Tina Stefanou (Guest) | Claire Trolio | Bourby Webster | Michelle White | Jaimi Wright | David Zampatti

# OUR SUPPORTERS

## **Government**

- The State Government of Western Australia through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries
- Lotterywest

## **Headline Supporters (\$10,000)**

- Warwick Hemsley
- Phil Thick and Paula Rogers
- Wright-Burt Foundation

## **Banner Supporters (\$5000)**

- Minderoo Foundation

## **Generous Types (up to \$2000)**

Emily Birch  
Jess Boyce  
Joanne Calder  
Shane Colquhoun and Leigh Cathcart  
Henry Boston  
Natalie Jenkins  
Georgia Malone  
Anonymous (12)

## **Arts Supporters**

- Awesome Arts
- Barking Gecko Theatre Company
- Co3 Contemporary Dance Australia
- Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery
- Performing Lines WA
- Perth Festival
- Perth Symphony Orchestra
- Spare Parts Puppet Theatre
- West Australian Ballet
- Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts
- West Australian Symphony Orchestra
- Western Australian Youth Jazz Orchestra

## **Other supporters**

- Cleaver Street & Co





Seesaw Magazine Incorporated

End of Financial Year - AGM

31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

# Balance Sheet

## Seesaw Magazine Inc As at 31 December 2020

31 DEC 2020

### Assets

#### Bank

Donations	31,439.42
Operating Account	81,079.79
Saving Account	59,554.37
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>172,073.58</b>

#### Current Assets

Accounts Receivable	2,970.00
Prepaid Insurance	2,312.50
Prepayments	249.99
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>5,532.49</b>

#### Total Assets

**177,606.07**

### Liabilities

#### Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	768.75
GST	7,060.58
Income in Advance	95,587.00
PAYG Withholdings Payable	2,710.00
Provision for Annual Leave	1,958.96
Rounding	(0.26)
Superannuation Payable	2,616.06
Wages Payable - Payroll	(6.00)
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>110,695.09</b>

#### Total Liabilities

**110,695.09**

### Net Assets

**66,910.98**

### Equity

Current Year Earnings	55,598.63
Retained Earnings	11,312.35
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>66,910.98</b>

# Profit and Loss

## Seesaw Magazine Inc

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	ACTUAL YTD	ANNUAL BUDGET	VARIANCE
<b>Income</b>			
<b>Earned Income</b>			
Earned income: Advertising	2,073	3,408	(1,335)
Earned income: Consultancies	4,200	3,000	1,200
Earned income: Friends & Buymeacoffee.com	4,126	3,998	128
<b>Total Earned Income</b>	<b>10,399</b>	<b>10,406</b>	<b>(7)</b>
<b>Private Support</b>			
Private Support: Donations	31,438	21,702	9,736
Private Support: Supporters	20,500	40,500	(20,000)
<b>Total Private Support</b>	<b>51,938</b>	<b>62,202</b>	<b>(10,264)</b>
<b>Government Funding</b>			
Government Funding: COVID 19 Stimulus	68,600	65,600	3,000
Government Funding: DLGSCI	79,577	79,577	-
Government Funding: Other state funding	4,967	4,967	-
<b>Total Government Funding</b>	<b>153,144</b>	<b>150,144</b>	<b>3,000</b>
<b>Interest and Other Revenue</b>			
Interest Revenue	75	88	(14)
Other Revenue	1,450	-	1,450
<b>Total Interest and Other Revenue</b>	<b>1,525</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>1,437</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>217,005</b>	<b>222,840</b>	<b>(5,835)</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>217,005</b>	<b>222,840</b>	<b>(5,835)</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>			
<b>Salaries and Fees</b>			
Salaries and Fees: Co-editors	71,159	59,241	11,918
Salaries and Fees: Business Manager	34,159	31,696	2,463
Salaries and Fees: Sub-editor - Festivals	3,675	3,425	250
Salaries and Fees: Contributors	16,775	28,203	(11,428)
<b>On Costs</b>			
On Costs: Annual Leave	1,959	-	1,959
On costs: Superannuation @ 9.5%	10,654	10,598	56
On costs: Workers Compensation Insurance	194	213	(19)
<b>Total On Costs</b>	<b>12,806</b>	<b>10,811</b>	<b>1,995</b>
<b>Total Salaries and Fees</b>	<b>138,574</b>	<b>133,376</b>	<b>5,198</b>
<b>Contractor Fees</b>			
Contractors: Finance Manager	7,463	7,350	113
Contractors: Marketing Consultant	3,100	3,454	(354)
Contractors: Podcast Project	1,648	1,325	323
<b>Total Contractor Fees</b>	<b>12,210</b>	<b>12,129</b>	<b>81</b>

	ACTUAL YTD	ANNUAL BUDGET	VARIANCE
<b>Marketing</b>			
Marketing: Advertising	39	2,450	(2,411)
Marketing: Documentation	10	500	(490)
Marketing: Hospitality and other misc costs	250	875	(625)
Marketing: Promotion	-	625	(625)
<b>Total Marketing</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>4,450</b>	<b>(4,151)</b>
<b>Administration Expenses</b>			
Admin: Bank fees	1,056	119	937
Admin: Stripe Fees	5	-	5
Admin: Contingency	-	5,000	(5,000)
Admin: Insurance	1,458	2,335	(877)
Admin: Legal	400	-	400
Admin: Staff Travel	614	-	614
Admin: Licensing and Subscriptions	50	-	50
Admin: Web hosting, Plugin and Cloud subscriptions	6,741	6,907	(166)
<b>Total Administration Expenses</b>	<b>10,323</b>	<b>14,361</b>	<b>(4,038)</b>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>161,407</b>	<b>164,316</b>	<b>(2,909)</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>55,599</b>	<b>58,524</b>	<b>(2,925)</b>